

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) A chemically ~~synthesized~~ modified double stranded ~~short interfering~~ nucleic acid (~~siNA~~) molecule, wherein:

a) the ~~siNA~~ molecule comprises a ~~first~~ sense strand and a ~~second~~ separate antisense strand, each strand having one or more pyrimidine nucleotides and one or more purine nucleotides;

b) ~~the first strand comprises a sense region and the second strand comprises an antisense region~~;

[[c)]]b) each strand is 19 to 29 nucleotides in length;

[[d)]]c) the first strand, second strand, or both first and second strands of the ~~siNA~~ comprise[[s]] two or more ~~than one modified nucleoside~~ nucleotides each having a Northern conformation modification; and

[[e)]]d) at least two of said modifications are different from each other.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule comprises one or more ribonucleotides.

21. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein said Northern conformation ~~nucleotides~~ modifications are selected from the group consisting of locked nucleic acid (LNA) ~~nucleotides~~; 2'-methoxyethoxy ~~nucleotides~~; 2'-methyl-thio-ethyl ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-deoxy-2'-chloro ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-azido ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-O-

trifluoromethyl ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-O-ethyl-trifluoromethoxy ~~nucleotides~~, 2'-O-difluoromethoxy-ethoxy ~~nucleotides~~, 4'-thio ~~nucleotides~~ and 2'-O-methyl ~~nucleotides~~ modifications.

22. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein the ~~first sense~~ strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end, the 3'-end, or both of the 5' and 3' ends.

23. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein the ~~second antisense~~ strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 3'-end.

24. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 22, wherein said terminal cap moiety comprises an abasic moiety.

25. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 23, wherein said terminal cap moiety comprises an abasic moiety.

26. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 24, wherein said abasic moiety comprises an inverted deoxyabasic moiety.

27. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 25, wherein said abasic moiety comprises an inverted deoxyabasic moiety.

28. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein any of the pyrimidine nucleotides in the sense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-O-methyl pyrimidine nucleotides.

29. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein any of the purine nucleotides in the sense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.

30. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein any of the pyrimidine nucleotides ~~present~~ in the sense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.

31. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein any of the pyrimidine nucleotides ~~of in~~ said antisense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluor pyrimidine nucleotides.

32. (Currently amended) The ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18, wherein any of the purine nucleotides ~~of in~~ said antisense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.

33. (Currently amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising the ~~siNA~~ nucleic acid molecule of claim 18 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.